

## I'm Gone, But You Left First

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Additional Tags:	<a href="#">Parent Tony Stark</a> , <a href="#">Tony Stark Has Issues</a> , <a href="#">Peter Parker is Tony Stark's Biological Child</a> , <a href="#">Tony Stark Acting as Harley Keener's Parental Figure</a> , <a href="#">Harley Keener is Tony Stark's Biological Child</a> , <a href="#">Harley Keener &amp; Peter Parker are Siblings</a> , <a href="#">Peter Parker Needs a Hug</a> , <a href="#">Hurt Peter Parker</a> , <a href="#">Teen Peter Parker</a> , <a href="#">Protective Stephen Strange</a> , <a href="#">Parent Stephen Strange</a> , <a href="#">Stephen Strange Acting as Peter Parker's Parental Figure</a> , <a href="#">Angst</a> , <a href="#">Not Tony Stark Friendly</a>
Language:	English
Series:	Part 1 of <a href="#">Is It Too Late To Fix This?</a>
Collections:	<a href="#">Peter Parker's Bio Parents</a> , <a href="#">Bekyros read</a> , <a href="#">Bekyros faves</a>
Stats:	Published: 2022-02-27 Words: 1978

## I'm Gone, But You Left First

by [Lol\\_ItsPriya](#)

### Summary

Tony Stark was not a good parent, not to Peter, at least.

Peter's heart is left shattered, but someone is there to pick up the pieces.

Or where Tony realizes he's been a shitty parent, but it might be too late.

### Notes

See the end of the work for [notes](#)

Peter Stark was born to Tony Stark and Mary Parker, and when Mary Parker died, Tony took custody.

It was a simple story really, no schemes, no murders, no foul play at all. Tony Stark did a DNA test to see if Peter was his, and he was. Tony Stark took Peter in with grace.

That didn't mean Tony Stark was a good father.

Peter had searched it up, generational trauma.

Maybe that's why his father didn't really talk to him, Peter really didn't know.

Throughout his life, he was watched by a group of revolving nannies, and when he was old enough himself. He lived on the same floor as his father, and later, Pepper, but he mainly kept to his wing of the floor. It wasn't always that way, though.

Peter used to always try to talk to Tony, whether it be waking up early to catch him in the kitchen, or waiting for him outside his lab, but it never worked. He was dismissed within seconds, and later, Peter learned to just keep to himself.

He didn't ask why he wouldn't see his father for days on end, he didn't ask why Tony messed up his name, he just went with it.

Maybe that's why he was so confused when Harley came along.

Harley, like him, was born out of Tony's one-night stands, and when Peter was nine, Harley moved in.

From what he gathered, Harley's mother was a drug addict, and Tony was his only next of kin. Peter was ready to be there for Harley. Be there when Tony wouldn't speak to him for weeks on end, be there when he messed up his name. But as it turned out, he didn't need to be there.

Maybe it was the fact that Harley was more social than him, or maybe it was the fact that he was old enough to properly hold a conversation with Tony when he moved in, but Tony had always been there for Harley.

He sent Harley to the same school he sent Peter, except the difference was that he was there. For every science fair, talent show, PTA meeting, everything. He had Harley down at his lab for at least an hour a day doing god knows what, and when the Avengers came around, everyone had game and movie nights every Saturday night.

Peter hadn't even spoken to the Avengers.

Harley was Tony Stark's son, Peter was the kid he had custody of.

Tony really didn't care where Peter went, or what he did, as long as it didn't affect him. So when Peter decided to skip school for a day, he really didn't notice. But then he decided to skip another day, and then another, and then another until his grades were straight Cs.

That was how he met him, the wizard.

Peter had been skipping again, not like Tony noticed, when he ran straight first into something.

No, someone.

He looked up to see a man with a goatee and blue eyes looking at him.

"Shouldn't you be in school?" he asked.

"Yeah, but my father doesn't care," he responded.

The man's face pinched before he shook Peter's hand.

"My name's Stephen, what's yours?"

"Peter"

"Would you like to get some hotdogs with me?"

And that's how he got hotdogs with Stephen Strange every day.

Eventually, Strange convinced him to go back to school, and they would meet for hotdogs after. Soon, Peter told him who he was. And with Peter's confession of his identity came, so did Strange's.

Who knew wizards were real?

When Peter started getting straight As again, it was Strange he told. When he tested out of all of his classes, it was Strange he told.

He went to the sanctum to see him every day after school, usually stayed for a while, before reluctantly going back to the tower.

But then, he accidentally fell asleep.

It was a Friday, so he didn't miss school, but when he returned to the tower, no one had noticed.

"My father didn't notice," he said hastily.

"Notice what?" Strange replied.

"That I didn't come home"

Strange's face grew soft, he had known about Peter's home life.

"I'm sorry, do you want to talk about it? You can tell me anything."

"No, I-I don't know, I just- thank you"

"I'm sorry?"

"Thank you, for being here I mean. You're-you're the closest thing I have to a father" Peter said.

He'd been thinking about it for a while, but this time he actually said it. What if Strange didn't feel the same way? What if he told him that he wanted Peter to leave? Would he lose the only father he's ever had? Would he-

"Peter!"

Peter was pulled out of his thoughts, faced with Strange's soft expression.

"I love you too."

Peter had stayed the night that night, and once again, Tony did not notice.

Maybe that's when he got too cocky.

The day that school let out for winter break, Peter went to Strange's. Strange had wanted Peter to

learn how to protect himself, after all, who knows what beings would target Peter for being close to him.

He had taught Peter about the energy of the universe, how it can be manipulated, and how to use it to defend himself. Peter had been a lot more open to the idea than Strange had been, which is why he had figured out how to open a portal in a couple of days. Granted, he couldn't exactly control it well or close it, but it was a very good start.

Neither of them had kept track of time, neither of them had wanted to, which is why they didn't realize.

By the end of winter break, Peter could open and close portals, create shields, and transport himself to the mirror dimension (Peter had only done that successfully once, and it was under guidance, but he still considered that a win.). He hadn't figured out how to separate someone's astral form from their physical form, but Strange said that takes at least months of training, so he shouldn't be discouraged.

The fact that Peter had clothes and toiletries at Strange's was probably a contributing factor to how they didn't notice, or maybe it was that they didn't want to notice, or maybe it was both. But either way, by the time Peter had to go to school again, he realized.

He hadn't been home once.

The two and a half weeks he had for winter break, he hadn't been home once.

And he loved it.

It was a 50% chance that his father would have noticed, so Peter wasn't too worried.

That is until Harley cornered Peter after his Science class the first day back.

"Where have you been!"

"I'm sorry?" Harley had spoken to Peter only a little more than his father had, and he never spoke to him in school.

"I asked you, where the hell have you been!"

"Oh, I-uh, wait— you noticed?"

"Dad's been worried sick! Nat and Rhodey were about to go search all of New York for you! You can't just disappear like that!"

"I have spoken to Natasha and Rhodey like once, why would they be looking for me? And, on that note, I highly doubt that Stark's been worried."

"One, don't talk about Dad that way, I know it may be hard, but you need to show some respect for your father. Two, he is worried. You're just too much of an asshole to notice. You're coming home with me today."

And with that, he walked away.

Harley wasn't joking when he said he'd have to come home with him. As soon as school let out, Harley dragged Peter to Happy's car and made him drive straight home.

When Peter stepped into the tower, he noticed not just Tony waiting for him, but Steve, Natasha,

Rhodey, Pepper, Clint, and Bruce were there.

“Looks like we got the whole party” Peter deadpanned.

“Where. Have. You. Been.” Tony said in a dangerous tone.

“A friend’s, really, nothing to worry about.”

“Nothing to worry about? Peter, you were gone for two and a half weeks!”

“You’re right, I’m sorry, I should’ve checked in or something”

“Sorry isn’t enough, do you know how worried we all were?”

“I’m sorry, what?”

Rhodey spoke up for the first time, “You heard what he said. We were all worried sick”

“Worried sick? I’ve spoken to all of you, like, once!”

“Peter!” Tony scolded.

“What! I’m just telling the truth! How are you all worried about me if you’ve never met me? And you, Stark, you barely notice me!”

“Hey! Don’t you speak to your father like that!” Steve scolded.

“Well he’s not much of a father, is he?”

“What’s that supposed to mean?” Tony spat.

“It means that you’ve literally never been there! You don’t know me! If you can name on time you’ve ever been there for me, spent time with me, or, hell, even acknowledged my existence, then I’ll admit I’m wrong!”

Tony just sat there, silently. “That’s not what this conversation is about”

“You’re only saying that because you know I’m right”

“That’s not true!”

“Oh please! You’re just trying to keep yourself from realizing that you’re just as much a deadbeat father as your dad!”

It was dead silent in the room, Peter had just stormed out, going to his wing of the floor. Nat had tried to comfort Tony, but he had just shrugged her off.

The next three weeks were....interesting. Not much changed for Peter as he usually kept to himself, but it was completely different for the others. Tony was holed up in his lab, and he refused to talk to anyone.

He was such a terrible person. He doesn’t even know where he went wrong. He was exactly like his father. Did he think Peter wasn’t worth his time? Or was he just a terrible person? Those questions tormented him for the next three weeks.

If it weren’t for the food and water Pepper had shoved into the lab, Tony would have starved himself. The guilt ate at him like maggots. For years he just....was Howard. Was exactly what he

vowed not to be.

He thought he was succeeding with Harley. That he had been exactly what his father hadn't been, that he was making his mother, Aunt Peggy, and hell, Pepper, proud.

He had practically let Peter drown.

It was three weeks later when he emerged from his lab again. Harley was right by his side, telling him that Peter was wrong, that he was a great father, but he just couldn't. He waved Harley off, not even wanting to explain, and went up to Peter's room.

He knocked on the door, but nothing. That was fair, he wasn't expecting Peter to be all kumbaya with him.

He knocked again "Peter? I really want to talk to you"

Still nothing.

"Peter, I am so, so sorry. Please, let me in"

"Sir" Friday's voice rang out.

"Not now, Friday"

"Sir, this is important"

"Not now— Peter, please just open up"

"Sir, Peter is not in his room"

Tony looked up in confusion.

"Then where is he?"

"Peter left the tower around five days ago, and has not come back"

What?

Tony opened the door to Peter's room to find that not only was his school bag gone, but things like clothes, papers, and textbooks were strewn out around the room. On Peter's dresser was a small piece of folded printer paper, and immediately Tony knew what had happened.

He ran to the common floor, where he knew the other avengers along with Harley and Pepper would be (probably waiting for him). He ran into the common space, and he was right. They were all there, and without hesitation, he said three words.

"Peter's run away"

## End Notes

The continuation of this will be in the next work of this series :)

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